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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SARAJEVO 001093

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: BOSNIA: PRESIDENT KOMSIC TO SEEK HIGH LEVEL  
MEETINGS TO STRESS DETERIORATING SITUATION IN BOSNIA

Classified By: Amb. Charles English for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. SEE PARAGRAPH 3.

¶2. (C) SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST. During a September 11 meeting, Croat member and current Chairman of Bosnia's Presidency Zeljko Komsic informed the Ambassador that during his mid-October trip to the United States (without the other two members of the Presidency) he would seek high-level meetings -- up to the President and Vice President -- to alert them to what he views as an increasingly unstable situation in Bosnia and to urge greater engagement of the United States. He stressed that the actions of European states do not give him confidence that the international community will be able to stop the sharp negative trend in Bosnia's political situation, and added that attempts at constitutional reform without a large escalation in engagement will ensure failure.

¶3. (C) ACTION REQUEST: Although the Ambassador tempered Komsic's expectations of meetings with the President or Vice President, given growing U.S.-EU interest in pursuing constitutional reform we encourage Washington to receive President Komsic at the highest possible level October 14-16.  
END SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST.

Komsic: Stand-offs with RS Could Destroy State  
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¶4. (C) Komsic expressed alarm at recent political developments in Bosnia and the concurrent drawdown of the international presence. Republika Srpska (RS) politicians are blocking Bosnia's progress on every front, he argued, and the imminent drawdown of the international community means that stand-offs between the RS and state institutions are likely to destroy the capacity and credibility of Bosnia's state institutions. As examples, he hypothesized that if High Representative Valentin Inzko uses Bonn powers to extend the mandate of the international personnel seconded to Bosnia's courts and prosecutor's office, RS PM Milorad Dodik will likely refuse to acknowledge their legal effect in the RS. If the State Prosecutor indicts Dodik, Komsic speculated, no one could effectively enforce it. Either event would more likely destroy Bosnia's legal system than strengthen the rule of law. Komsic stressed that these are but two examples of possible incendiary stand-offs, but that RS politicians are impeding progress on every front, even on seemingly routine tasks -- like disposing of excess weapons and ammunition -- that Bosnia must accomplish to realize progress towards its stated and supposedly common goal of NATO membership.

Komsic: Will the RS Question Bosnia's NATO Path?  
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¶5. (C) Komsic called particular attention to the announcement after a recent meeting between Dodik and Serb

Democratic Party President (SDS) Mladen Bosic that the RS should hold a referendum at the entity level on Bosnia's future NATO membership. He speculated that this switch in policy is either irresponsible populism or the subject of a deal with Belgrade or perhaps even Moscow. He said it is now even more critical for Bosnia to quickly submit its request for a NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) and to make credible progress towards Bosnia's NATO ambitions. If the trend of stirring opposition to NATO in the RS continues, Komsic said, it may sooner or later escalate into serious opposition to NATO from the RS and RS politicians. Once Bosnia's NATO ambitions become a point of nationalist contention, there will be no going back, he said. As Bosnia's EU ambitions seem distant and unrealistic right now, NATO is the only game in town, he added.

Komsic: Little Hope  
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¶6. (C) Komsic finished his bleak assessment of Bosnia's politics by saying that the close relationship between organized crime and politics left little room for change, that his colleague (Bosnian-Serb) President Radmanovic was also very worried, and that the prospect of constitutional change -- as he understood current proposals -- was a sure-fire way to bring absolute failure to Bosnia. Only a massive escalation in engagement will create the possibility of success for the efforts of the international community to bring stability to Bosnia, Komsic said, and he hopes that he can find an interlocutor in Washington at the level to take such a decision. "The problem is very simple," Komsic added, "The war has not ended, and the parties to that war are still

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using political mechanisms to further their war aims."  
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